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# Ford Explains His Doom at the Top

By JAMES WIEGHART and PAUL HEALY

Washington, Nov. 3 (News Bureau)—President Ford went before the American people on national television tonight to explain the abrupt firing of two of his top national security advisers and the equally sudden withdrawal of Vice-President Rockefeller as his 1976 running mate.

The two actions—apparently unrelated—caught official Washington by surprise and gave rise to rumors of a "palace coup" instigated by Secretary of State Kissinger, who has long had his differences with Defense Secretary James R. Schlesinger and Central Intelligence Agency Director William E. Colby.

Kissinger denied any hand in the firings, which occurred early yesterday morning but only became known late last night—giving rise to the title "the Sunday Night Massacre." Sources close to Kissinger fingered White House chief of staff Donald M. Rumsfeld—Schlesinger's replacement at the Pentagon—as the man behind the dismissals.

Once a Congressman  
Rumsfeld, a former congressman from Chicago who served as a presidential counselor to Richard Nixon, telephoned several key Republican leaders of Capitol Hill to deny that the firings were his doing.

Besides Rumsfeld, Ford has tabbed the U.S. representative to Communist China, George Bush, to replace veteran spy Colby as head of the faction-ridden CIA. Bush's nomination was expected to come under fire from Senate Democrats, who contend that there is no precedent for naming a partisan political figure—Bush served as GOP national chairman from 1972 to 1974—to head the CIA.

Schlesinger's departure, while the timing of it caught Washington by surprise, was not entirely unexpected. Rumors have circulated for months that he and Kissinger did not see eye to eye on a number of important foreign-policy issues.

## 3 Major Matters

Kissinger's policy of detente with the Soviet Union. Rep. Samuel Stratton (D-Amsterdam) said Schlesinger, who warned against believing Russian promises of disarmament, had

been "sacrificed on the altar of detente."

• Kissinger has been pushing for completion of the Vladivostok-SALT-2 agreement, but it is known that Schlesinger has been dragging his feet, seeking tougher terms from the Russians.

Ford and Kissinger had hoped to complete the SALT-2 agreement with a politically salable summit meeting with Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev by the end of this year. But this has become increasingly unlikely, and the White House and State Department feared that the talks might run over into the 1976 election year. If that happened, they would have to be put off until 1977, in the view of most experts.

• Kissinger and Schlesinger clashed over the secretary of state's promise of sophisticated U.S. weapons—including Pershing missiles—to Israel, and of other American military equipment to Egypt.

Schlesinger, while advocating arms for the Israelis, feared that Kissinger was drawing upon supplies needed for the U.S. forces in Europe and elsewhere. He also was believed to be worried about the proliferation of nuclear weapons in the volatile Middle East.

## Pick His Deputy

Kissinger was not untouched by the shakeup. He was asked to give up his second job as national security affairs adviser to the President, in favor of his deputy, Air Force Lt. Gen. Brent Scowcroft.

Rumsfeld was viewed on Capitol Hill as the big winner in the exchange, leaving a dead-end White House job for a high-visibility cabinet post. At the same time, however, he kept his White

Council, and Rumsfeld's loyal deputy, Richard Cheney, is taking over Rumsfeld's old job as chief of staff.

In the wake of the shakeup, Rumsfeld, Kissinger and Treasury Secretary William E. Simon, who apparently was not involved in the intrigues, emerged as the three strongmen of the administration.

## Barry Is Happy

The Rockefeller announcement pleased conservatives, who only a few hours before had been harshly critical of the President for dumping Schlesinger. Sens. Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) and Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), the one-two punch of GOP conservatism, thought the Rockefeller decision "commendable."

Sen. Henry M. Jackson (D-Wash.), who is seeking the Democratic presidential nomination, thought Ford might "protect his right flank" by offering former California Gov. Ronald Reagan the No. 2 spot on the 1976 ticket.

## Frank Is Unhappy

But Reagan, in Florida, said he had no desire to be Ford's running mate. "I never believed the second spot had a great bearing on how people vote," he said. "The presidential candidate is the important one." Reagan is

believed ready to declare his candidacy later this month.

As for the replacement of Colby at the CIA, this has been in the works for some months. Sen. Frank Church (D-Idaho), chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, viewed Colby's dismissal as yet another effort to thwart his panel's investigation and described it as "an outrage."

Church said that Colby had been a generally cooperative witness before the committee and pattern . . . of trying to thwart the committees work . . . There is no question in my mind but what concealment is the new order of the day."